United Nations S/PRST/2002/2

Security Council

Distr.: General
31 January 2002

Original: English

Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4465th meeting of the Security Council, held on 31 January 2002, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Africa", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

The Security Council expresses its appreciation to H.E. Mr. Amara Essy, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), as well as the Ministers who participated in the Public Meeting on the "Situation in Africa" on 29 January 2002 for their invaluable contributions to the debate on the "Situation in Africa".

The Security Council reaffirms the principles of political independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of all States and their obligation to settle their dispute by peaceful means.

The Security Council, recalling its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security as well as the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, underscores the importance of partnership and enhanced coordination and cooperation, based on complementarity and comparative advantage, between the United Nations, the OAU and subregional organizations in Africa in the promotion of regional peace and stability. It welcomes the decision of the OAU Summit held in Lusaka in July 2001 to undertake a review of the structures, procedures and working methods of the Central Organ of the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution (CPMR). It emphasizes the importance of enhanced cooperation and of ensuring better coordination between the United Nations and the OAU with the view to achieving a lasting solution to conflicts. In this regard, it requests the Secretary-General to encourage the United Nations Liaison Office to the OAU in Addis Ababa to interact more closely with the OAU Mechanism for CPMR on the conflicts in Africa. The Security Council expresses its readiness to deepen its cooperation with the OAU and subregional organizations and invite them to inform it at the earliest possible stage over their decisions and initiatives that could have implications relating to its responsibilities under the Charter.

The Security Council calls on the United Nations system to intensify its cooperation, including assistance within existing resources, to the OAU and subregional organizations in Africa in the field of capacity-building, particularly in early warning conflict prevention and peacekeeping. It also

02-23871 (E) 310102

stresses the importance of effective interaction between the United Nations system and the OAU and subregional organizations through the exchange of information and analysis at the conflict prevention stage; coordination and clear understanding of respective roles in forwarding peace processes; and coordinated support to national and regional peace-building efforts. In this regard, the Security Council welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Office in West Africa and requests the Secretary-General to take all necessary measures for that Office to be fully operational.

The Security Council notes with satisfaction that good offices missions carried out by prominent political leaders of Africa facilitated significant progress in the political settlement of certain conflicts; it encourages the OAU and subregional organizations, taking into account the specific situation of conflicts, to seek appointment of such figures as Special Envoys as well as to employ where appropriate the traditional methods of conflict resolution including the establishment of Councils of Elders; the Security Council stresses the importance of the preventive character of such efforts and emphasizes the need for their proper coordination. The Security Council stresses the specific needs of women and children in peace processes and encourages the strengthening of the role of women and youth in the search for solutions to conflicts in Africa.

The Security Council encourages the ongoing efforts undertaken by the international community in addressing the root causes of conflicts in Africa as indicated in the Report of the Secretary-General on the Causes of Conflicts and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa (A/52/871-S/1998/318). The Security Council, bearing in mind the linkages between conflicts in Africa and inter alia poverty and development, the illicit proliferation of small arms and light weapons, the problems of refugees and internally displaced persons, the illegal exploitation of natural resources and, social exclusion as a source of intra-State conflicts, reaffirms its continued commitment in addressing these problems and encourages the OAU as well as subregional organizations and international financial institutions to do likewise. The Security Council stresses that the early resumption of international cooperation and development aid to countries where a peace process is being implemented is of critical importance for the success of this peace process and further stresses the importance of the role of the donor community and international financial institutions in this regard.

The Security Council stresses that good governance, democracy, rule of law, and the respect of human rights and the fight against poverty are essential for peace, stability and sustainable development in Africa. It also stresses the importance of national reconciliation through dialogue in respective countries. It expresses its strong support to the decisions of the OAU Heads of State and Government at the Algiers Summit held in 1999 denying recognition to Governments that come to power through unconstitutional means and notes with satisfaction that this decision is being implemented. It reaffirms that resolution of conflicts in Africa requires, above all, the political will and courage of the parties themselves to seek peace.

The Security Council expresses concern over the effects of conflicts on civilian population including violations of human rights, in particular those

affecting the most vulnerable groups such as the elderly, women and children. It emphasizes the responsibility of States concerned to put an end to impunity and prosecute those responsible for such acts.

The Security Council underlines the need to address the problem of refugees and internally displaced persons which in addition to humanitarian consequences constitute a burden on the affected countries and which may become a source of conflict. It notes the shortfall in funding for refugee and internally displaced persons programmes in Africa and reiterates its call upon the international community to provide such programmes with the necessary financial resources, taking into account the substantial needs in Africa.

The Security Council, recalling its resolution 1308 of 17 July 2000, inter alia recognizing that the HIV/AIDS pandemic is also exacerbated by the conditions of violence and instability and constitutes a potential risk to stability and security, reiterates that the pandemic, if unchecked, may pose a risk to stability and security. The Council urges the international community and donors to coordinate their efforts in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

The Security Council reiterates the importance of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) in the process of conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building, and notes the lack of adequate resources for effective reintegration programmes. In this regard, it urges the international community to support such programmes, including through the implementation of quick-impact projects.

The Security Council notes that African States can contribute to peace and security in the continent by implementing transparency and confidence-building measures. In this regard, the Security Council reiterates its call on all States to implement the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects.

The Security Council welcomes the participation of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to its Public Meeting on the Situation in Africa on 29 January 2002. It reaffirms the importance of strengthening its cooperation, through greater interaction, with the ECOSOC, in accordance with Article LXV of the Charter of the United Nations, in the area of the prevention of armed conflicts, including in addressing the economic, social, cultural and humanitarian problems. The Security Council, taking note of the time it devotes to discussing African conflicts and the specificity of the problems of Africa, underlines that economic rehabilitation and reconstruction constitute important elements in the long-term development of post-conflict societies and the maintenance of lasting peace and calls for greater international assistance in this regard. The Security Council expresses its resolve to seek to establish the political conditions for non-recurrence of a particular conflict before withdrawing any peacekeeping operation.

The Security Council commends and supports the efforts of African countries within the framework of the fight against international terrorism.

The Security Council welcomes the ongoing transformation of the OAU into the African Union and encourages and supports the principles of the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) to create the conditions for

development and to enhance economic integration in Africa. It recognizes that sound economic policies will further enhance peace and stability in the region. It calls upon the donor countries and the Bretton Woods institutions to continue assisting Africa in implementing the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries initiatives and to work with African governments, through the NEPAD, to create necessary conditions to attract and mobilize public and private sector resources in support of economic growth and poverty reduction.

The Security Council notes the usefulness of its meeting with the Secretary-General of OAU and stresses the importance of holding such consultations on a regular basis, at least once a year, in the future.

The Security Council recognizes the need for adequate measures to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa, and will consider the setting up of an ad hoc Working Group to monitor the above recommendations and to enhance coordination with ECOSOC.